GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:324
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
PREPARATION OF LIST OF BPL PERSONS
Chavda Shri Harisinh Pratapsinh;Rana Shri Kashi Ram

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prepared a list of those living below the poverty line;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reason therefor;

(d) whether the list being prepared has several discrepancies and mistakes owing to which it is not likely to serve the stated purpose;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore;

(f) whether the Government has received complaints from the State Governments regarding identification of BPL families;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

h) the remedial measures taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) to (h): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (h) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 324 FOR ANSWER ON 21.3.2007 REGARDING PREPARATION OF LIST OF BPL PERSONS BY SHRI KASHIRAM RANA AND SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA

(a) to (h): The number and proportion of people living Below the Poverty Line in the country is estimated by the Planning Commission at the national and state level from the large sample survey on household consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization and the Ministry of Rural Development conducts the BPL Census through the State Governments and UT Administrations to identify the families living Below the Poverty Line in the rural areas who could be assisted under various programmes of the Ministry. This exercise generally coincides with every Five Year Plan.

For the 10th Five Year Plan, detailed guidelines were issued to the States/UTs to conduct the BPL Census 2002. These guidelines were issued on the recommendations o f the Expert Group, and followed the Methodology of Score Based Ranking of the rural households, and for this purpose 13 socio-economic parameters were prescribed. The survey work had started in 2002 itself, however, in the mean time, Hon`ble Supreme Court passed a stay order on deletion of any name from the existing list during one of the hearings of the Civil Writ Petition No.196 of 2001 on 5.5.2003 in the matter of PUCL V/s Union of India. The stay has since been vacated on 14.2.2006 and the States and UTs have already been advised to finalise the list of BPL families for the rural areas.

The Ministry of Rural Development has taken appropriate steps to ensure that the BPL list based on BPL Census 2002 is prepared in a transparent manner. For this purpose, Gram Sabha has been authorized to approve the BPL list at the village level. A provision has been made to provide the photocopy of the survey form on demand to any body to reveal as how the scores have been given. A two-stage appeal mechanism has also been introduced. Any objection can be filed before the SDM/Tehsildar as the case may be and people still having objections can file an appeal with the District Collector. These files are to be decided in a time bound manner. Instructions have also been issued to display the list at the Panchayat Headquarters and also to display it on the website.

On the directions of the Supreme Court, a provision has also been made to allow new names to be added and ineligible names deleted from the BPL list on a continuous basis during the period to which the list applies. Therefore, the guidelines provide for an in-built system to redress the grievances of the people, if any and to remove any discrepancy in the list.

Some States wanted a higher limit on the number of BPL families to be identified. However it was clarified that the guidelines already provide that the number of BPL families can be identified in such a way that it should be equal to the poverty estimates of 1999-2000 or the adjusted share whichever is higher. In addition another 10% families could be added to account for transient poor which gives adequate flexibility to the States.